Organisation of Tourism Promotion Programme abroad

269. SHRI TARLOCHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry organized promotional programme in New York in September, 2007;

(b) if so, the details about the functions and how many dance groups and other artists were sent from India for performance;

(c) whether any troupe have been sent from Punjab and Gujarat; and

(d) what is the total expenditure of the entire programme?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The Ministry of Tourism, alongwith the Ministry of Culture and other Ministries and the Confederation of Indian Industry organized a series of events in New York from the 23rd to 26th September 2007 under the banner "India @ 60" to celebrate 60 years of India's independence.

(b) to (d) The various organized during "India @ 60" included cultural performances of folk and classical dances, music bands, fashion shows, display and demonstration of handicrafts and handlooms, sampling and display of Indian cuisine, tea, coffee and spices, photographic exhibitions, a sand sculpture of the Taj Mahal, seminars and panel discussions.

Classical Dance Troupes including Odissi, Bharatanatyam, Manipuri, Kathakali, Kathak and Mohiniattam groups as well as Folk and Tribal dance troupes from Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Delhi, Gujarat and Punjab were sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India to perform at the event.

The State Governments of Assam, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra and Rajasthan also sponsored folk dance troupes.

In addition, three music groups, sand sculpture artist and 12 master craftspersons were sent for the event.

This expenditure on the event is being met from within the "Overseas Promotion and Publicity" budget of the Ministry of Tourism for the current financial year.

Promotion of Punjab Tourism abroad

270. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that various places of pilgrimages and tourist spots in the State of Punjab have not been promoted abroad;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps Government have taken or proposed to take to popularize the pilgrimage and tourist places abroad and how much money has been spent during last two years on promotion of Punjab Tourism?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Tourism through its global media campaigns and the promotional activities of overseas offices promotes tourist attractions including pilgrimage sites of the country, including Punjab.

(c) The promotional activities undertaken in the overseas markets include advertising, participation in fairs and exhibitions, organizing seminars, workshops and road shows,

publication of brochures, joint advertising and brochure support and familiarisation tours of media personalities, tour operators and opinion makers.

The Ministry promotes India as a preferred tourist destination and there is no State-wise allocation of funds. The expenditure on Overseas Promotion and Publicity in the last two years is given below:

1. 2005-06 Rs. 140 Crore

2. 2006-07 Rs. 165 Crore

Package for development of tourism in Sikkim

271. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme as a special package for the development of tourism in the State of Sikkim;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken by Government thereto; and

(c) the details of funds allocated to the State of Sikkim for development of tourism during the last three years and current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Development and promotion of tourism is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. Ministry of Tourism, Government of India provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) for tourism related projects for tourist destinations and circuits including religious place to the North East Region under the following schemes:

(i) Product/Infastructure Development for Destination and Circuits

(ii) Information Technology

(iii) Fairs/Festival/Events

(iv) Large Revenue Generating Projects

(c) Amount sanctioned during the last three years and current financial year to the State of Sikkim is as follows:

(Rs. in lakh)

Year	Amount sacntioned
2004-05	655.81
2005-06	2712.89
2006-07	2609.42
2007-08 (till date)	5378.88

Beautification of Durga Hatkoti Mandir in Shimla

272. SHRI RAJNITI PRASAD: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether her Ministry has received a representation which was forwarded by the Prime Minister's office in the months of August, 2007 regarding renovation/beautification of Durga Hatkoti Mandir in Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh on the pattern of Mata Vaishno Devi Mandir;